

Secretary

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528



**Homeland  
Security**

June 19, 2009

The Honorable Harry E. Mitchell  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Mitchell:

Thank you for your March 25, 2009 letter to President Obama regarding the need for additional resources to address the threat posed by Mexican drug cartels. I appreciate your support of my recently announced border initiatives. Assigning National Guard assets to the southwest border, as you suggested, is an option that is being seriously considered as a part of our overall border security strategy.

The critical nature of the violence in Mexico adjacent to our border requires immediate attention. With this in mind, on March 24, 2009, I announced a number of initiatives to enhance border security. These include redeploying 360 additional officers and agents at the border and in Mexico; deploying biometric identification technology under the Secure Communities Program to identify criminal aliens; the addition of a Border Enforcement Security Team in New Mexico; increasing outbound inspections at ports of entry; and utilizing both canines and upgraded license plate readers to help identify suspected outbound vehicles. You can be assured that I will closely watch the impact of these efforts, together with those of the Government of Mexico, concerning the operations of the cartels operating in the Northern Mexico border region.

Thank you again for your support and suggestions to secure the southwest border. I hope to continue to foster a close working relationship with you on this issue and other homeland security matters. Should you need additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (202) 282-8203.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janet Napolitano", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Janet Napolitano